

NOVEMBER 2021

# MAKING COP26 COUNT

How investing in public transport  
this decade can protect **our jobs,**  
**our climate, our future**



**The Future Is  
PUBLIC  
TRANSPORT**

### **C40**

The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) connects 97 of the world's greatest cities, representing over 700 million people and one quarter of the global economy. Created and led by cities, C40 is focused on tackling climate change and driving urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, whilst increasing the health, wellbeing and economic opportunities of urban citizens.

### **ITF**

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led federation which improves working lives, connecting nearly 700 affiliated trade unions from 150 countries and helping to secure rights, equality and justice for their members. ITF works as a voice for nearly 20 million working men and women across the world.

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## Section 1

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the right action and public investment, including from national governments, public transport can be an engine that powers the world out of the economic, social and climate crises we face today. World leaders are meeting to agree next steps on climate action at the UN climate conference in Glasgow. The need for action has never been more urgent. The United Nations has warned that we are at 'code red for humanity', with human-induced climate change already affecting weather and climate extremes in every region of our planet<sup>1</sup>.

Transport is currently responsible for a quarter of CO2 emissions. To combat this, a global shift to public transport, walking and cycling is needed, reducing car use alongside a transition to zero-emission vehicles. **The proportion of public transport journeys in the world's cities must double in this decade to bring global emissions down, in line with keeping the temperature rise to 1.5°C.** Without this action, it will simply not be possible for countries to deliver on the global goal to at least halve emissions within this decade.

**“ Climate protection cannot work without a modal shift. Local transport must become a good alternative to cars ... above all, people must be taken along.”**  
Robert Seifert, young vehicle maintenance worker, Berlin

**Doubling public transport usage as part of a green recovery would, by 2030, create tens of millions of jobs in cities around the world (4.6 million new jobs in the nearly 100 C40 cities alone), cut urban transport emissions by more than half, and reduce air pollution from transport by up to 45%<sup>2</sup>. It would protect lower-income and service-sector workers and connect city residents to work, education and community.**

This briefing brings together **key insights from interviews on the ground in cities around the world** – from transport workers, city officials and commuters - about the needs of and potential for our cities' transport systems. It features **new research highlighting the local jobs potential in five global cities** that are leading the way, or have the political will, in making this shift on public transport. It also puts forward **new polling** demonstrating the level of public support for this investment.

Interviewees highlighted the good progress that has already been made to strengthen access to public transport in cities, but also described **the obstacles we need to overcome to move forward**. Under-funding; short-termism; disjointed planning; ageing, damaged infrastructure unfit for a changing climate; poor working conditions and low morale; cuts to services and privatisation: these are just some of the issues which can undermine our public transport systems, discouraging potential passengers, hurting the workers that keep our societies moving and the communities who depend on them, and making it more difficult for cities to deliver services - as well as negatively impacting climate targets.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, 'Secretary-General Calls Latest IPCC Climate Report 'Code Red for Humanity', Stressing 'Irrefutable' Evidence of Human Influence', 9 August 2021; <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sgsm20847.doc.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://thefutureispublictransport.org/>

“What most workers and commuters want is public transport that is reliable, that is sustainable, that is affordable [and which provides] more and better jobs for employees.”

Eric Phumlani, South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union (SATAWU), Johannesburg

The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted both the funding available for and the use of public transport, at the very point we need both to increase. It has also reinforced just how important the system is for workers that we all depend on. While office workers were typically able to work from home, around the world we saw the likes of health workers, energy workers, cleaners and care workers - as well as transport workers themselves - relying on buses, trains and metros throughout the crisis. This underlines the lack of protections and safety nets for informal transport workers, with accounts of some left struggling to survive through lockdowns.

By contrast, transport workers, city officials and union leaders described how transformational it can be when we achieve a major modal shift to public transport. This means investing in, planning and running affordable systems which people can rely on to get them where they need and want to go safely, comfortably and quickly. When public transport provides a real alternative, and is coupled with mechanisms to incentivise shifts away from private cars, it can yield huge benefits in terms of tackling climate change, quality of life, creating jobs and making them more accessible, and promoting social and gender justice and public health.

“It's making passengers feel it's safe and convenient ... that transit is useful, it's affordable, connections are easy and the system is easy to navigate.”

Jesus Sapien, Public Transit Director, Phoenix

These views are supported by the data. New modelling in five global cities shows that investing in public transport at the level needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C would create over 650,000 new, good-quality transit jobs in those cities alone and another 650,000 more jobs globally.

Polling in different cities indicates that members of the public expect their usage of public transport to rebound, but they want to see public transport systems become more accessible, affordable and widespread to help workers connect to their jobs and make society run better. Importantly, there is strong public support across different regions for investing in and expanding public transport for the benefit of people and the planet. And such investment would have wider societal benefits, with positive impacts for social equality, safety, public health, social welfare, quality of life, access to work, education and economic development.

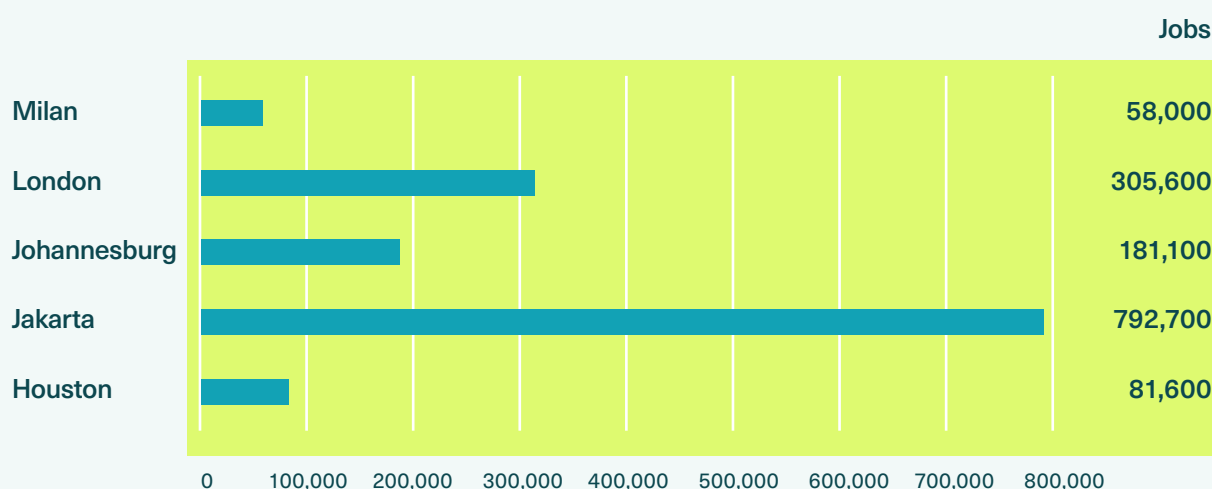


Chart 1:

Public transport investment is a jobs engine. Climate-friendly public transit investment creates hundreds of thousands of jobs for cities and countries, 2021 – 2030.

Given the urgent need for action, transport unions, mayors of some of the world's leading cities, workers, civil society groups and city residents have joined together to **call on the world's governments to be more ambitious in their climate plans**, and direct the scale of investment required so that everyone has access to clean public transport. This must start by cities doubling the share of journeys by public transport and advancing a just transition to zero emission transport by 2030. Cities are already taking action, but much more can be done with the right support from national governments and the right partnerships locally, bringing cities together with workers and the communities they serve to deliver a just transition.

“**Cities designed, managed and operated to be consistent with a zero-carbon economy will be fantastic places. They'll be green, less polluted, safer and more accessible.**”

Ben Plowden, Transport for London



**PHOTO:** Queen Street Station, North Hanover Street, Glasgow, UK by Ross Sneddon | **SOURCE:** Unsplash

Glasgow Trades Union Council's Stuart Graham explained that the strain hosting COP26 will itself place on Glasgow's public transport will illustrate how desperately investment, planning and coordination is needed to achieve a system which works for people and planet. He called for the conference to be a starting point for a new commitment to support public transport over the next decade.



## Section 2

### INTRODUCTION

While progress has been made by national governments on setting targets to phase out diesel and petrol cars, firm targets to increase the share of journeys being taken by public transport are **largely missing from the revised nationally determined contributions (NDCs)** submitted under the Paris Agreement<sup>3</sup>. This is in contrast to the many cities that have not only pledged to create zero-emission areas for traffic by 2030, but have also identified the need to increase the share of trips made on public transport or by walking and cycling.<sup>4</sup>

Significant investment is required to expand, improve and move towards zero-emissions public transport. US\$208 billion a year is needed this decade for the nearly 100 C40 cities that together account for 25% of global GDP. **With trillions currently being spent on COVID-19 economic stimuli, this is a key opportunity to bring emissions down rapidly while creating much needed jobs and boosting local economies.** Following the drop in travel resulting from COVID-19, which led to a loss of revenues for public transport just at the point both ridership and funding needed to increase, we are now seeing that urban residents expect to return to public transport ridership post-pandemic<sup>5</sup>.

As this briefing shows, major investment is now required to achieve modal shift. This is necessary if we are to bring global emissions down in line with keeping temperature rises to 1.5°C.

Such investment generates important economic and societal benefits too. C40 and ITF have conducted new modelling, focusing on five global cities, to show how many jobs new public investment could create in both the cities themselves and country-wide. Alongside that, city officials, transport workers and unions across 19 cities globally have been interviewed to gather insights into how public transport investment should be planned and coordinated, and how operations should be run, to maximise benefits for passengers, workers, residents and wider society.

The findings provide important insights, which highlight the actions that need to be taken by decision-makers at COP26 and beyond.



**PHOTO:** Boda boda riders in Kampala, Uganda | **SOURCE:** ITF

<sup>3</sup> <https://changing-transport.org/summary-analysis>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.c40.org/other/green-and-healthy-streets>

<sup>5</sup> Polling data conducted on behalf of C40 by Clear Path Strategies

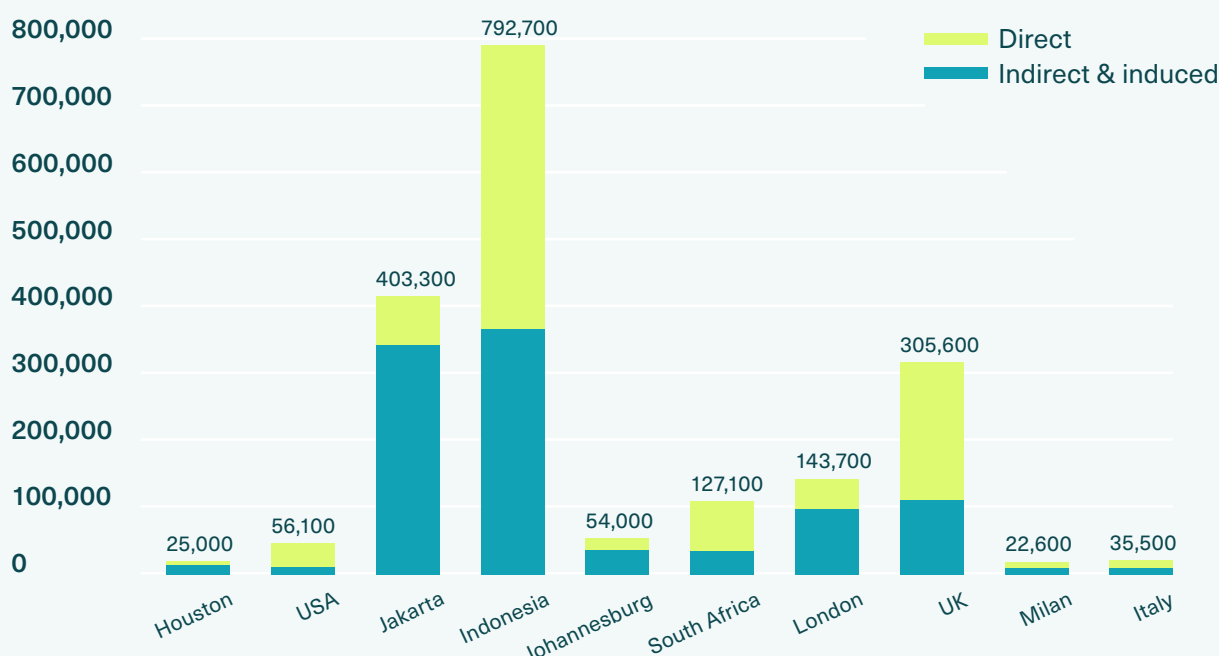
## Section 3

### JOBS AND ACCESS TO MORE JOBS: WHAT PUBLIC TRANSPORT INVESTMENT COULD DELIVER

Public transport is not only key to averting catastrophic climate change, **it is a powerful motor of job creation**. The investment needed for modal shift to keep us on a pathway of a maximum global temperature rise of 1.5°C could create millions of good-quality jobs in cities around the world. This would also stimulate urban economies, leading to further job creation.

To show just what investment could mean in practice, modelling carried out in five cities (London, Jakarta, Milan, Johannesburg and Houston) shows that **each city would gain tens of thousands of jobs between 2021 and 2030 via public transport investment** and put them on a pathway to meet climate goals aligned with the Paris Agreement. **Additional jobs would be created throughout the country where each city is located**, in manufacturing and services that support and result from public transport investment. Still further jobs would likely be created by the stimulation of urban economies through increased access to employment, services and leisure activities.

**London**, for example, would gain 143,700 public transport jobs while **the UK** as a whole would gain 161,900 additional jobs, for a total of over 300,000 jobs between 2021 and 2030. Aligning **Johannesburg's** public transit system with policy to limit temperature increases to 1.5°C would create 127,100 public transport jobs throughout **South Africa**, with 54,000 of those in Johannesburg itself. Extrapolating this to cities throughout the world means that climate-friendly public transit investment would create **millions of jobs globally**.



**Chart 2.** Jobs created by Paris Agreement-aligned public transit investment in five sample cities (note: jobs created in a country include those in the city).



“It is essential that the government has a vision for public transportation, building a public transportation network as the best way to tackle the climate crisis in terms of the transportation system. At this moment, many governments are only talking about a shift from gasoline cars to electric cars ... but to tackle the climate crisis, the government should point out that it is very important to have a public transportation system to reduce personal vehicle use.”

SungHee Oh, Korean Public Services and Transportation Workers' Union (KPTU), Seoul

Public transport investment would generate a mix of direct, indirect and induced jobs in both construction and operations:

- **Direct jobs** are created directly by the new investment, either through construction or operations. This would include, for example, new jobs building rail lines or operating additional transport routes.
- **Indirect jobs** are created as a result of spending on goods and services for construction or operations. This would include, for example, jobs manufacturing rail components for new rail lines.
- **Induced jobs** are created by new workers spending on services like food or retail, allowing those industries to grow due to the increased economic activity. This would include, for example, spending on food or clothes by construction workers employed on building new rail lines, or by new transport workers.

Across the five cities, the modelling showed that direct jobs would account for four out of ten (42%) total jobs created. The remaining jobs are indirect and induced, which demonstrates how public transport investment can be a dynamic engine for broader economic activity.

“The huge advantage of investing in a system that is carbon zero, or going towards carbon zero, is that it has a whole set of other benefits ... It stimulates the supply chain in the UK economy where quite a lot of vehicles are made. It has huge benefits in terms of air pollution and health.”

Ben Plowden, Transport for London

As well as generating jobs in urban centres, modelling showed a substantial number of jobs generated nationwide. **Job creation would be split roughly half and half between the cities themselves (49%) and the rest of the countries where they are situated (51%).** There are some variations depending on where in each country key industries are located. In the more industrial Milan, for example, more jobs (64%) would be created in the urban area.

The modelling also considered transport job creation through a gender lens. Women's participation in public transport employment remains stubbornly low. Given today's distribution of jobs between men and women, only one in three jobs created would go to a woman (33%). This underlines **the importance of proactive policy to end gender-based segregation and discrimination in public transport work and advance a just transition.**

The motor of jobs and economic growth that is public transport will need adequate public funding to run properly. Putting in the investment to fund the public transport improvements and expansion we need over the next decade and beyond will be a vital part of keeping the world from tipping into a climate catastrophe. And every dollar, rupiah, pound, euro, or rand invested in public transport is a vehicle for job creation, generating work for people all over the world.

**“ We must develop the infrastructure as a whole ... We need appropriate vehicles and then we must facilitate and make the modal shift more attractive, in particular for commuters. This way, they are given the opportunity to shift from their private cars to local public transport ... We need a financial ramp-up for the local public transport and for railways ... it really depends on funding.”**

Martin Burkert, Railway and Transport Union (EVG), Berlin



**PHOTO:** Passengers on MRT, Jakarta, Indonesia by Pradamas Gifarry | **SOURCE:** Unsplash

## Section 4

### STORIES FROM THE GROUND: HOW THE CLIMATE CRISIS, COVID-19 AND CASH FLOW HAVE IMPACTED PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Violent cyclones and typhoons, smoke from rampant forest fires: in every city, interviewees described the climate change impacts they are already experiencing. The damage and harm spread across our economies, communities and societies, including to public transport.

Johannesburg workers, for example, explained how **heavy rains** and **major storms** can damage rail tracks and vehicles, and cause buses to get stuck, leaving users unable to get to work. In Stockholm, major rainfall has led to flooding in tunnels leading to and from stations and impacted the bus network, while **extreme snowfall events** can knock out the entire transport system. Such incidents impact the reliability and speed of public transport, which can push users away from the very services we need to help tackle climate change.

“**One of the big issues ... is planning ... for how our system will cope with more extremes of weather. None of our drainage or sewage systems ... is designed to cope with the ... amount of water we're likely to have in the future. What are the impacts of that going to be on the public transport system?**”

Sam Gurney, Trades Union Congress (TUC), London

Climate change also has implications for **public health**. A city official described how people with respiratory conditions would move to Phoenix in the 1970s and 80s because of its clean air. The city is now seeing issues with poor air quality and rising asthma rates. Among those affected are, of course, the men and women who keep public transport moving. In Cairo, a union official working at a hospital explained how, as temperatures have risen, she has seen patients arriving with conditions like hypertension and heart disease struggling as temperatures have ramped up.

Where working conditions are already poor, without decent protections or standards, climate impacts can cause further harm. Interviewees in Manila and Cebu explained how transport workers on informal buses ('jeepneys'), who already drive 12 to 16 hours a day, are being affected by increasingly high summer temperatures. As union official Angelica Mata put it,

“**[The] traditional jeepney ... engine is [around] 15 to 20 years old already... It's hot on their feet. [And in the heat], the sweat is just drying up on their backs. So that's very hazardous for them. And they cannot stop because ... they have to keep up with the payments, the gas, the take-home [pay].**”

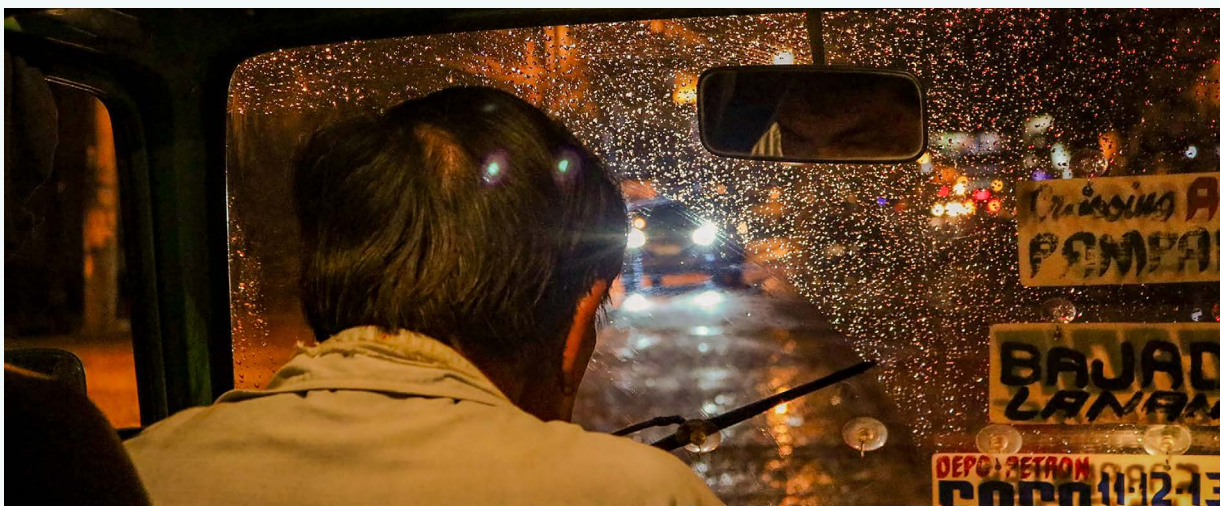


PHOTO: Inside a jeepney in Davao, Philippines | SOURCE: Piqsels



The consequence is exhaustion and very low morale among drivers, which is bad for them, bad for passenger safety, and bad for the public transport system which relies on them.

**“ Workers in the informal sector, they don’t have job security. They don’t have anything, any protection ... So we need the government ... to decide whether informal transport workers should have social security and protection. That will be beneficial today and in future, too.”**

Dennis Kamadi, Transport and Allied Workers Union (TAWU), Nairobi

Old or damaged **infrastructure** is another issue. Some of Berlin’s rail infrastructure has been in service for over 175 years, while Johannesburg and Durban have seen services disrupted by vandalism and cable theft. Workers and unions in Delhi, Mumbai and Lucknow raised concerns over the dismantling of their public transport systems and the dangers to workers posed by privatisation, outsourcing and informalisation.

More broadly, interviewees raised concerns that in some cities the planning and coordination of public transport is not meeting people’s needs. They described the “rampant splintering” of services following some forms of privatisation of public transport. Coordination becomes a problem among multiple competing operators, and when a passenger cannot, for instance, easily use a ticket across different routes run by competitors, this puts them off using public transport.

**“ In South Africa, most people used to use public transport, but because of the unreliability ... most people decided on getting their own mode of transport, which means more cars on the road ... There are people that are aware [and] concerned about the climate changes. But ... if the public transport is not reliable, then what are you going to do?”**

Zenathi Mtshabe, bus worker, Johannesburg

**“ It’s about money and political will... Common sense is being labelled as radical.”**

Stuart Graham, Glasgow Trades Union Council

Interviewees described **a mix of underlying issues: short-term funding linked to political cycles** and who controls expenditure; lobbying by other interest groups at the expense of public transport; **policies of privatisation and informalisation**, and in some cases corruption; and **narrow approaches which put transport in a bubble**, missing how it links to policy areas like the environment, health and development.



**PHOTO:** Mandela Bridge with trains underneath in Johannesburg, South Africa, by Tembinkosi Sikupela | **SOURCE:** Unsplash

## And, of course, the pandemic...

**“ Unfortunately, due to the impacts of COVID-19, 84 staff members lost their lives. Despite the losses, the staff never stopped working ... and, by virtue of that, the railway kept on running ... Mumbai’s lifeline, the railway, continued to provide services to the people.”**

Pradeep Ahire, metro worker, Mumbai

COVID-19 has hit public transport hard, at the very time the climate emergency is making the sector more important than ever. The pandemic has also underlined just how important the system is for the livelihoods of local communities.

As passenger numbers reduced significantly, either due to official restrictions or passenger concerns over health, interviewees described how people turned to private vehicles.

**In cities where restrictions are easing, continued reluctance to use public transport has implications for traffic congestion.** And that has a huge economic cost: in 2017, congestion was estimated to have cost the US alone US\$305 billion (a 10% increase from the previous year)<sup>6</sup>.

**Polling in different cities indicates that members of the public expect their usage of public transport to rebound, but they want to see public transport systems become more accessible, affordable, safer and widespread** to help workers connect to their jobs and for society to run. Importantly, there is strong public support (an average of 87% of the population in the five surveyed cities) for prioritising investing in and expanding public transport for the benefit of people and the planet.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to understand who continued to use public transport, even at the height of the pandemic: typically lower-income workers, often those on the frontline of the COVID-19 emergency. This highlights that, **for many of the people on whom our communities rely - those who run our hospitals and health clinics, who look after the most vulnerable and keep our cities clean - public transport is not a choice.** It is the only option they have. And it is important that we have a system which serves them as they serve us.

**“ With COVID, because less people are taking public transport, it’s really obvious that there’s way more traffic on the roads. You can definitely see a correlation there.”** James Glimco, Teamsters Local 777, Chicago

**“ The folks that are riding our services are the folks that need it the most. We definitely saw that through the pandemic. We saw medical workers, hotel workers, construction workers ... They were not ‘choices riders’. They didn’t have the option of telework. Public transport was absolutely the only way for them to get around, especially to their jobs and schools, and secondarily to things like shopping, groceries and medical appointments.”**

Jesus Sapien, Public Transit Director, Phoenix

The pandemic both impacted funding and exposed weaknesses in current systems. London, for example, relies heavily on farebox revenues because it does not receive the level of government funding for public transport operations from which other cities benefit. Farebox revenues collapsed at the start of the pandemic, as Londoners followed government guidance to stay at home and avoid all but essential travel. **Despite the fall in demand, Transport for London (TfL) kept services going so that they were available for those making essential journeys, and to avoid passengers turning their backs on a service they could not rely on.**

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-07/new-study-of-global-traffic-reveals-that-traffic-is-bad>

<sup>7</sup> C40 commissioned polling on public perceptions of public transport in Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Milan and Phoenix in the period to September 2021.



“ What people want when they turn up ... is a safe, reliable and orderly [public transport] system. If you start cutting services [due to COVID-19] ... you potentially get into this spiral where people trust the system less, don't use it, therefore don't pay your fare, and therefore you get into a downward spiral where you're cutting services progressively.”

Ben Plowden, Transport for London

However, TfL was left with a huge shortfall, with serious implications in terms of both paying its immediate bills and keeping up long-term investment. While the UK government subsequently offered extra funding, unions have objected to some of the strings attached which they fear could lead to fare hikes, job cuts and attacks on conditions of employment. Given the pandemic recovery and the climate crisis, governments should be providing funding and support to improve public transport while making it more affordable, so as to achieve the modal shift we need to limit global heating to 1.5°C.

Interviewees in cities like Johannesburg described public transport operators - including those owned and managed privately - going out of business through lockdowns, leaving only informal transport to fill the gaps. And **informal workers especially were too often left without an income or sufficient assistance through lockdowns**, forced to find other means to survive and, in the worst cases, finding themselves criminalised for begging. This reinforces the need for a system with sustained public funding, and formalised work with adequate protections for workers.

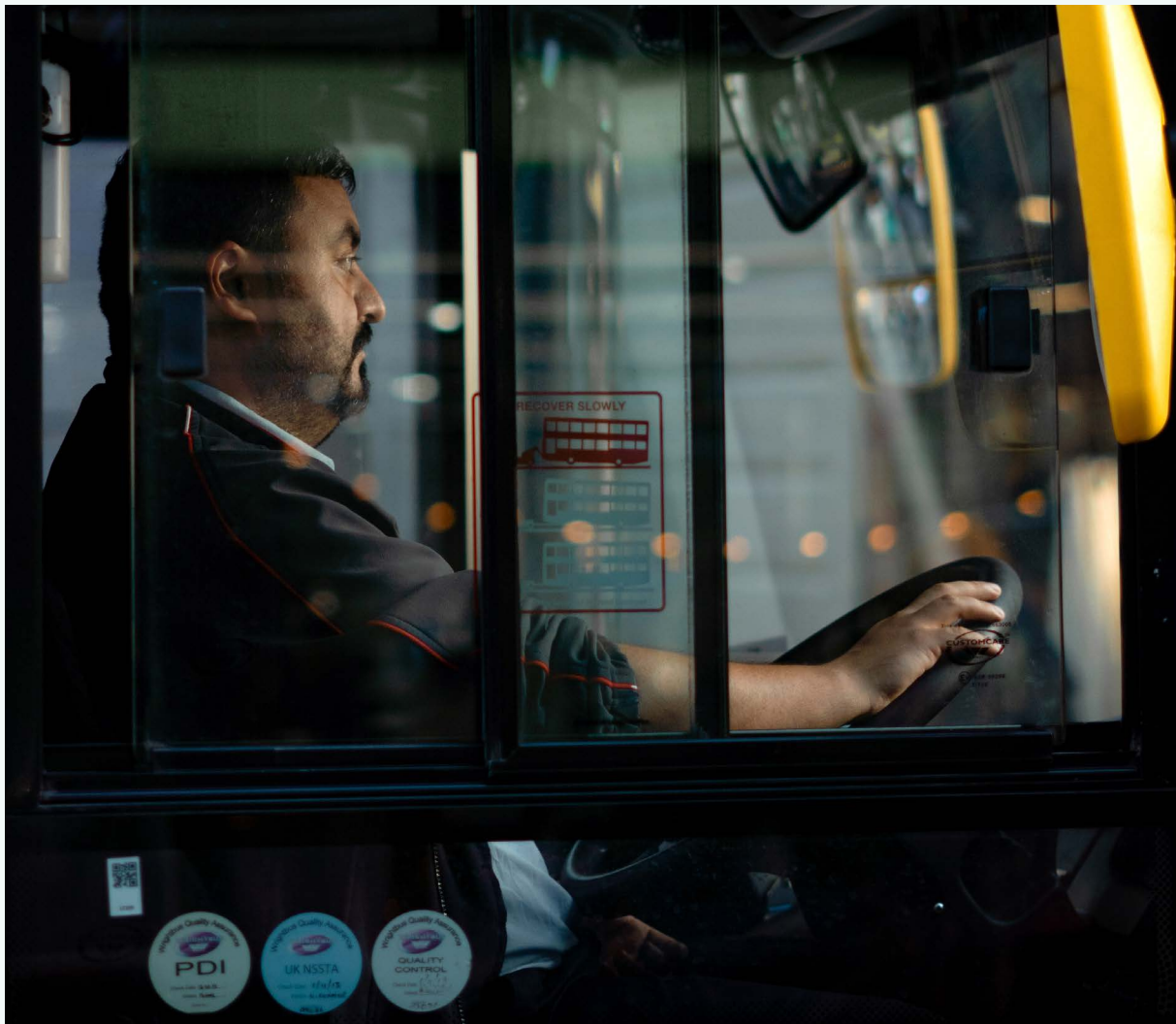


PHOTO: Bus driver in London, UK by Just Jack | SOURCE: Unsplash

“ Especially during the start of the pandemic last year, because of the loss of work opportunities for drivers, they were practically begging on the streets. Asking for help from the general public in order for them to survive. The government’s response to their seeking help and assistance was, especially in response to their begging, to put them in jail.”

Ernesto Cruz, National Confederation of Transport Workers Unions (NCTU), Manila

### WHY A JUST TRANSITION TO ZERO EMISSION BUSES IS ESSENTIAL

Many of the workers and union officials interviewed raised the link between climate change initiatives and electrification, and the risk of some jobs being made obsolete. They highlighted their support for more energy-efficient public transport as they themselves are exposed to high levels of risk from air pollution. But there must be a just transition that is inclusive, creates jobs and reduces inequalities.

“ There are a lot of highly skilled jobs ... and all of those workers will have to be retrained ... What happens to them with electrification? We want [these workers] to remain employed, but they need to have training, so that they can take a similar job at the same level. You can’t ask mechanics doing a highly skilled job today to do a low-skilled job in the future.”

Angelo Piccirillo, Italian Federation of Transport Workers (FILT CGIL), Milan

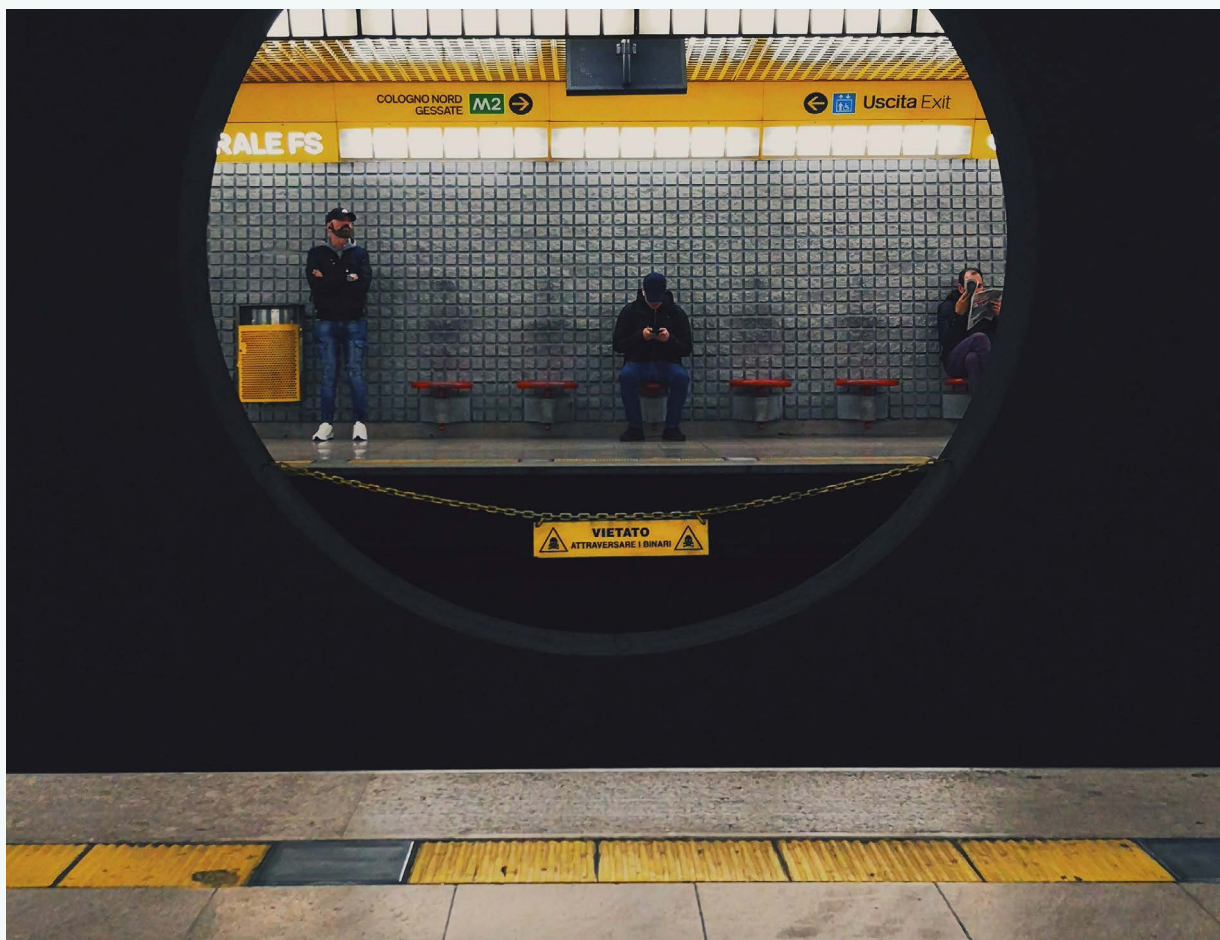


PHOTO: Metro station in Milan, Italy by Josè Maria Sava | SOURCE: Unsplash

## Section 5

### A TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT

“ **Every government should acknowledge the critical role of public transportation in society. They should talk more about how the government can strengthen the public transportation system for ordinary people, not for the rich.**”  
SungHee Oh, KPTU, Seoul

“ **The way to get greenhouse gas reductions is to make [reduced driving] possible - to make that fair and reasonable there need to be good alternatives in place.**”  
Daniel Firth, C40 and former city official

Global leaders need to recognise how important the way we travel is to the struggle against climate change, and to all our daily lives. Interviewees emphasised the need for **public transport systems which people can always rely on to get them where they need to go.** Systems must be built to serve communities who already depend on them, while becoming a viable option for many more people. Passengers and our communities need public transport workers with good working conditions and job security.

**Transport must not be traded off against support for areas like health, education or social welfare. Public services need to be seen as interdependent, and planned as such.** As we invest in public transport we must take a broad and long-term view, taking account of the impacts of both societal shifts and climate change. By investing in infrastructure and operations resilient to changing weather conditions, we reduce the risks of unexpected costs and disruption from retrofitting and damage in future. And with the pandemic accelerating remote working for many office workers, we need to plan for where and when people are likely to travel.

“ **A system that is carbon zero or going towards carbon zero is a ... win, win, win. You get environmental benefits but also very significant social and economic benefits... Compact, connected and clean cities ... are going [to be] sustainable both from an environmental point of view, but also socially and economically.**”  
Ben Plowden, Transport for London

Positively, there are strong examples to draw from in public transport systems around the world. TfL, for example, has achieved a major modal shift, with walking, cycling and public transport trips at around two-thirds, up from half when the public authority was formed in 1999. TfL also sits across the planning, management and operation of London's whole transport system, including creating disincentives for car use, and can share learnings with other cities, looking at what they can best do given their specific circumstances. Public transport is not a competition. By sharing approaches and ideas with each other, cities can, with proper investment and support, move quickly to strengthen their systems.

At the same time, **interviewees emphasised the need for safeguards and effective scrutiny,** to increase public confidence in new support and ensure that funding leads to the real change our planet and society need.



## BUILDING FROM POSITIVE EXAMPLES: PHOENIX

In Phoenix, a city covering a large area and where the majority of trips are made using private vehicles, voters backed major investment in public transport in 2015. City officials explained how, having already invested in a fleet of cleaner vehicles, they began adding routes, adding earlier and later times, increasing frequency and coordinating bus and light rail times. They discussed approaches with the local community and brought the location of more vulnerable communities into planning. With temperatures hitting new highs, they looked at how to make public transport more attractive, with initiatives like shade corridors, so people can get to and wait for buses more comfortably. This approach saw a rise in passenger numbers before the pandemic, and positive feedback from people who have not used public transport in the past.



**PHOTO:** Light rail stop in Phoenix, USA by Judy Hedding | **SOURCE:** Tripsavvy

## Section 6

### CONCLUSIONS

From this research we can see there are varied and significant **challenges** facing us, but that the benefits – for our jobs, our climate and our future – of committing to public transport in cities around the world are very significant.

**Public transport is an economic, social and climate solution:** city leaders, officials and transport workers know that and are already protecting and championing the way we move around our cities, working hard to keep communities safe, connected, healthy and happy. We can see from our research that people living in cities acknowledge, appreciate and widely support this.

**We need to harness and solidly back the dedication and talent of city leaders, officials and transport workers by providing immediate, long-term and stable government financial support.** Doubling the percentage of public transport journeys in cities, in order to keep us on the pathway of a maximum of 1.5°C global heating, requires governments around the world to step up, walk the talk and take **courageous financial decisions**. The time for action is now. The future is public transport.



**PHOTO:** Two children at bus stop in Warsaw, Poland by Oska26 | **SOURCE:** iStock



## Recommendations

1. Cities, metropolises and territories need immediate, **long-term and stable governmental financial support**, in order to deliver:

Safe, frequent, affordable and accessible public transport within a 10-minute walk from all city residents' homes.<sup>8</sup>

A green and just recovery that collectively doubles the proportion of public transport journeys in cities, and advances a just transition to zero-emissions public transport by 2030.<sup>9</sup>

Access to work and a better health and quality of life for all in a post-pandemic world, achieving the aims of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

2. We urge national leaders to urgently **raise their ambition on urban public transport in line with these goals as part of their Nationally Determined Contributions**, and immediately set out on a path towards delivering them within a year as part of their economic plans. This would mean using appropriate and agile legislative and financial tools to deliver the scale of public investment required for a significant commitment to modal shift to public transport. As an integrated system, public transport requires a holistic government approach. National governments, local authorities, mayors, and international institutions must work together to ensure equitable public transport access for all, ensuring a green and just transition.
3. All the workers who keep our public transport moving, formally and informally, should be engaged in the planning and implementation of expanded systems, including electrification, **with the aim of creating and sustaining decent, green and formal jobs**, with good working conditions, pay, standards and rights.

[Read and share The Future Is Public Transport global coalition statement.](#)

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<sup>8</sup> This vision is inspired by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy's 'People Near Frequent Transit' indicator: <https://naindicators.itdp.org/>

<sup>9</sup> Data from McKinsey suggests 40-80% of miles travelled in cities needs to be walking, cycling and public transport to limit global heating to 1.5°C. Using current ratios this is roughly 30-60% for public transport. Pre-pandemic data (2019) from Google's Environmental Insights Explorer indicates that an average of 29% of distance covered across 60 cities is by public transport.

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## Methodology

This report is based on modelling and interviews carried out between July and September 2021.

Full details of the methodology behind the modelling and the results generated are available online at <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/reports-publications>, <https://www.c40knowledgehub.org> and <https://thefutureispublictransport.org/>.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with transport workers and city and union officials covering 19 cities: **Berlin, Cairo, Cebu, Chicago, Delhi, Durban, Glasgow, Jaipur, Johannesburg, London, Lucknow, Manila, Milan, Mumbai, Nairobi, Phoenix, Seoul, Stockholm and Vancouver.**

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